The much anticipated NSW Asylum Seeker Policy has been finalised. This very positive development approves fee waivers for specified public health services to community based asylum seekers who are Medicare ineligible. Inclusions are:

- emergency care for acute medical and surgical conditions, including admission;
- some elective surgery for conditions (those listed as Clinical Priority Categories 1 & 2);
- ambulatory and outpatient care required to maintain health status of asylum seekers with acute and chronic health conditions (eg diabetes);
- maternity services, including antenatal care; and
- mental health services (inpatient and community based).

Published on 21st October 2009, it is effective immediately and compliance by area health services is mandatory. See the NSW Health website for more details.

The new Refugee Youth Health Clinic commences on the 5th November at the Fairfield Liverpool Youth Health Team (FLYHT), Carramar. Initially the clinic will be functioning on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Referral forms will soon be available for download from our website and from FLYHT. For referrals please ring ph 87780770.

You are invited to a Health Forum on Diverse Refugee Communities from Burma in NSW – Karen, Rohingya and Burmese Refugees. This half-day forum will be held on Tuesday 24th November at Auburn Hospital, 9.00am - 1.30pm. Those health service providers wishing to know more about this group and how to engage them more effectively are encouraged to attend. It is an initiative of the Refugees from Burma Forum Working Group. For more information or to register contact B-Ann Echevarria or Diana Milosevic at RHS on 8778 0770.

A national Clinical Advisory Group on PBS Access for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants (CAPAR) has been established and will advise the Dept of Health and Aging on the specific medication needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants. Dr Mitchell Smith, the Director of RHS, has been appointed as the public health representative. More information is available on the Victorian Refugee Health Network site: click here.

FECCA and NPS are undertaking research on the use of medicines amongst new and emerging communities and humanitarian entrants to inform future programs. A Research Advisory Group is being established to oversee the research. If you are able to assist by providing input, or would like further information about the research, contact Kumiko Kawashima ph 6282 5755.

Our Community Education Program is recruiting new Bilingual Community Educators (BCEs) who speak any of the following languages: Arabic, Assyrian, Dinka, Juba Arabic, Dari, Burmese, Karen, Kirundi and Swahili. Successful applicants will be trained to deliver health information sessions to newly arrived refugees and employed as sessional workers on a contractual basis. In addition to delivering information about the health care system in NSW, BCEs may also be linked to other activities at RHS including assisting our Nutrition Project, running focus groups and developing resources. Closing date for applications is Monday, 16th November 2009. Contact Lidija Sestakova for more details.
New research


- Pittaway E & Muli C (2009) *We have a voice, hear us*: settlement experiences of refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa, Centre for Refugee Research. This report documents the experiences of resettlement and integration in Australia of refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa, and their recommendations for how to better support their resettlement and integration. Commissioned by the Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency.

- Fisher C (2009) *The exploration of the nature and understanding of family violence within Sudanese, Somali, Ethiopian, Liberian and Sierra Leonean communities and its impact on individuals, family relations, the community and settlement*, ASeTTS. This comprehensive report used qualitative research to explore how family violence was conceptualized by the communities, its impact, causes and how it is responded to, including gaps in service delivery.

Call for papers

- Diversity in Health 2010 Conference’s call for papers closes on the 8th February 2010. The Conference, to be held in Melbourne on the 7-9 June, will feature three major themes:
  - Cultural integrity in service delivery
  - The right to health
  - Modern multiculturalism

The conference will also feature several minor themes representing key issues in diversity and health, including refugee health and wellbeing. See the Diversity in Health 2010 Conference website for more details.


Training & professional development


- **5&12 November 2009**: *Disability Rights Awareness* 2-day training offered by the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW, Liverpool. Contact Annalee or Maria for more information at 9891 6400.


- **12 November 2009**: *Expect Respect: It’s everybody’s business, Domestic and Family Violence Forum*, with a focus on family/domestic violence in CALD communities, Auburn. To register email women@speakout.org.au.

- **24 November 2009**: *Burmese Health Forum: A focus on the health needs of Burmese, Karens and Rohingyaas*, 9.00 – 1.30. Conference Room 1 & 2, Level 5, Auburn Hospital, Sydney. For more details contact Bann Echevarria at the NSW Refugee Health Service.
- **24 November 2009:** Free *Clinical Master Class Evening Presentation on Clinical Supervision* with Daphne Hewson. To register & for more details: [www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au).

- **26 November 2009:** *Vicarious Trauma and Self Care Strategies for Workers*, Sydney. To register & for more details: [www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au).

- **7-11 December 2009:** Health, Development and Human Rights Intensive Course, UNSW, Sydney. Applications are now open for Expressions of Interest from individuals working in health, human rights, advocacy and/or international development. For more details: [www.ihhr.unsw.edu.au/education/courses.html](http://www.ihhr.unsw.edu.au/education/courses.html).

- **7-9 June 2010:** *Diversity in Health 2010* Conference, Melbourne. Presented by the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health. See the conference website for Conference themes and other details.

If you have a refugee health-related item for the next Refugee Health E-news please contact:
Cathy Preston-Thomas, (02) 8778 0770, Cathy.Preston-Thomas@sswahs.nsw.gov.au

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